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**Testimony in support of HB 2094 for the Conscientious Exemption to State-Mandated
Vaccines**

Good afternoon, my name is Monica DeGraffenreid and I am a voter from Wichita. My husband, Dr. Aaron DeGraffenreid and I have 2 children, Gemma (4) and Kolbe (2), plus another on the way.

Before having children, vaccines were something I thought were absolutely necessary for everyone. It just seemed right and normal to go along with the status quo. But sometime during my daughter's first year of life, I began to think about things a little more. I have put much thought and research into *every* decision I have made in my children's lives; from breastfeeding, to the type of diapers I use to the kinds of food I put into their bodies and their educations. I slowly came to the realization that vaccinations were also something that needed our full informed consent with the option to freely delay or decline without the worry of penalty or discrimination. We rarely medicate our children, how is it fair that we should be required to inject chemicals, heavy metals, residual fetal DNA and live viruses into their little bodies using a "one size fits all" schedule that has arguably not been adequately studied for its long-term effects.

My husband and I certainly do not consider ourselves anti-vaccine and do not believe that all vaccines are bad. When my parents had this decision to make for me, ten rounds of three vaccines were required before they sent me to school. Today, around twenty-five rounds of eight immunizations are required by the time a child reaches kindergarten, with many being combined doses of various vaccines that are injected at the same time into the developing and vulnerable bodies of our babies starting as early as birth or two-months of age. And in addition to boosters for several of these vaccines, there are also currently multiple rounds of four other vaccines that, while not yet required, are being strongly recommended for school-aged children.

Many parents consent to vaccination without full knowledge of the risks and benefits of immunizations due to the pressure of a requirement. Thankfully, we have a wonderful, respectful relationship with our family doctor who works with us to use a vaccine schedule tailored to each of our children's individual needs. This works until our children reach school-

age. If state law does not allow us the right to vaccinate on a reasonable schedule that we have worked out with our doctor, then where is the informed consent? Parents should not be penalized for informing themselves.

It is my belief that it should be the right and duty of each and every parent, along with their family doctor, to *responsibly* evaluate the necessity and timing of each individual vaccine for each of their children, on a child-by-child, case-by-case basis. Nineteen other states have laws that allow parents to freely make these decisions, and there has been no discernible negative impact to these states' public health. We're not asking for the world, we're simply asking for our parental rights to be respected, for true informed consent. And we are not only looking to protect our rights now, but we are also looking to the future when some of today's recommended vaccines, such as that for Human Papillomavirus (a sexually transmitted disease) will inevitably make it to the required list.

I am a mother. I love and care about my children more than anyone on this planet ever could. I want only what is best for them. Thank you for your time and consideration in this gravely important matter.